

REMARKS

Reconsideration and allowance are respectfully requested in light of the above amendments and the following remarks.

Applicants acknowledge with appreciation the indication in the Office Action that claims 3-5 are allowable and claims 7-13 are allowed.

A proposed change to Fig. 17 is submitted herewith to overcome the objection thereto.

Claims 1-13 have been cancelled in favor of new claims 14-25, which better define the subject matter Applicants regard as the invention.

Support for the subject matter of claims 14-25 is provided in the original claims, Fig. 1, and the specification on page 21, lines 9-12, and page 23, third paragraph.

Allowable claims 3-5 have been re-written in independent form as new claims 16-18.

Allowed claims 7-10, 12, 11, and 13 have been re-drafted for clarity as new claims 19-25, respectively.

In light of these amendments, Applicants submit that claims 16-25 are in condition for allowance.

Features of original claim 1 are now recited in claim 14, and features of original claim 6 are now recited in claim 15.

New claim 14 has been drafted to avoid the issue prompting the rejection of claim 1 under 35 USC §112, second paragraph.

Claims 1, 2, and 6 were rejected, under 35 USC §102(b), as being anticipated by Onoda (US 6,038,432). To the extent these rejections may be deemed applicable to new claims 14 and 15, the Applicants respectfully traverse.

The Applicants submit that Onoda fails to disclose the feature recited in claim 14 of an up/down counter that switches, in accordance with an up/down signal, between an up-count operation and a down-count operation so as to produce a count value, such that:

(1) when the up-count operation is performed, the up/down counter increments the count value in accordance with a first clock signal supplied to a first terminal of the up/down counter; and

(2) when the down-count operation is performed, the up/down counter decrements the count value in accordance with a second clock signal supplied to a second terminal of the up/down counter.

By contrast to the above-noted claimed feature, Onoda discloses in Fig. 3 that the output of a comparator 5 is input to an up-down counter 7 at a timing determined by a clock signal supplied by a pulse generating circuit 19 (col. 7, lines 11-13).

When the output of comparator 5 is a high-level signal "H," a count value of up-down counter 7 is increased (col. 7, lines 13-15). When the output of comparator 5 is a low-level signal "L," the count value of up-down counter 7 is decreased (col. 7, lines 15-17).

In short, Onoda discloses using a single clock signal to regulate the speed by which the up/down counter may increment the count value, when the supplied comparator signal is high, and decrement the count value when the supplied comparator signal is low. Onoda does not disclose a circuit in which the count incrementing and decrementing speeds are determined by distinct clocks signals.

The AGC circuit defined by claim 14 recites incrementing the count value of an up/down counter in accordance with a first clock signal and decrementing the count value in accordance with a second clock signal. With the claimed structure, an advantage may be provided that, the first and second clock signals may have different frequencies, so that the attack and recovery times of the AGC circuit may be adjusted separately (see specification page 6, third paragraph).

Accordingly, the Applicants respectfully submit that Onoda does not anticipate the above-noted subject matter defined by

claim 14. Therefore, allowance of claim 14 and dependent claim 15 is warranted.

Claim 15 recites subject that provides an additional reason for its individual allowability, in that the up-count and down-count operations defined in base claim 14 are regulated such that the count value is restricted within a range from an upper limit to a lower limit. The Office Action proposes that Onoda discloses this feature in column 7, lines 11-20 (Office Action page 6, discussion of claim 6 rejection). The Applicants respectfully disagree.

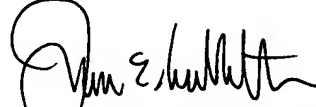
The Applicants submit that the cited portion of Onoda's specification provided above shows that Onoda does not restrict the count value to a range defined by upper and lower limits. Moreover, the feature recited in claim 15 is similar to that recited in allowable claim 4, although the latter claim identifies specific structural limitations for inducing the recited functional features.

Accordingly, Applicants submit that Onoda does not disclose the above-noted feature recited in claim 15. Therefore, it is submitted that allowance of claim 15 is warranted for this independent reason.

In view of the above, it is submitted that this application is in condition for allowance and a notice to that effect is respectfully solicited.

If any issues remain which may best be resolved through a telephone communication, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned at the local Washington, D.C. telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,



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JEL/DWW/att

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IN THE DRAWINGS

A proposed change to Fig. 17 is submitted herewith, with a Letter to the Official Draftsman.

FIG. 17

RELATED ART

